

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 10976 121739Z

63

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AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

/AMEMBASSY LIMA 415

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

AMEMBASSY MEXICO CITY

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CINCSOUTH

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 10976

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UR, MX, PE, XM, XK, XL

SUBJECT: SOVIET VIEWS ON LATIN AMERICA

REF: (A) MOSCOW 5584 (NOTAL), (B) MOSCOW 9892 (NOTAL)

(C) MOSCOW 10634 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. TWO SOVIETS KNOWLEDGEABLE IN FIELD OF
SOVIET LATIN AMERICA POLICY EXPRESSED SOME PESSIMISM
CONCERNING FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS ON CONTINENT AND PREDICTABLY DEFINED
SOVIET FOREIGN POLICY GOALS IN REGION AS EXTREMELY MODEST
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 10976 121739Z

IN SCOPE AND INTENSITY. SOVIETS MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

--CURRENT STRATEGY CALLING FOR BROAD INITIAL FRONT OF PROGRESSIVE FORCES--INCLUDING REPRESENTATIVES OF ARMY AND CHURCH--IS DESIGNED PRIMARILY TO COUNTER GROWING FASCIST TREND IN REGION:

--DIVERSITY OF LATIN AMERICAN IS SUCH THAT STRATEGY IS NOT EVEN APPLICABLE IN ALL COUNTRIES;

-- SOVIET POLICY BOILS DOWN TO SUPPORT FOR SELF-DETERMINATION FOR COUNTRIES OF REGION;

-- LA MILITARY MAY STILL BE WAVE OF THE FUTURE IN AREA POLITICS, BUT IT IS TENDING TO FORSAKE "PROGRESSIVISM" FOR "RIGHTIST HANGING ON TO POWER; AND PERUVIANS DON'T MUCH LIKE SOVIETS;

--OUTSIDE MILITARY SUPPLIERS, IN GENERAL, TEND TO BECOME CAPTIVES OF THEIR CLIENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBASSY OFFICERS CALLED JULY 8 ON SERGO MIKOYAN, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF "LATIN AMERICA" MAGAZINE (AND SON OF A.I. MIKOYAN) AND JULY 9 ON VLADIMIR GRIGOR'EVICH SPIRING, "EXPERT" (COUNSELOR), LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES DEPARTMENT, MFA.

3. USING JUNE 22 PRAVDA ARTICLE BY MIKHAIL FEFOROVICH KUDACHKIN, LA SECTION CHIEF, INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT, CC CPSU, AS BASIS FOR DISCUSSION, EMBOFFS INQUIRED ABOUT KUDACHKIN'S EMPHASIS ON NEED FOR ACHIEVEMENT IN LATIN AMERICA OF "BROAD UNITY OF ALL ANTI-IMPERIALIST FORCES" INCLUDING "WORKING CLASS, PEASANTRY, PETTY AND MIDDLE CLASS BOUREGOISE, REPRESENTATIVES OF ARMY AND CHURCH."

4. MIKOYAN, WHO HAD RECENTLY RETURNED FROM A TRIP TO SEVERAL LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES INCLUDING ECUADOR, PERU, HONDURAS, AND COSTA RICA, SAID KUDACHKIN'S ARTICLE WAS PERHAPS DRAWN TOO BROADLY BUT THAT ITS EMPHASIS ON NEED FOR POLITICAL DEFENSE AGAINST GROWTH OF LATIN AMERICAN FASCISM DID REPRESENT MINIMAL
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 10976 121739Z

STRATEGIC GOAL IN REGION, A LIMITED POLICY WHICH DID NOT LOOK BEYOND IMMEDIATE NEED TO RESIST FASCIST TENDENCIES IN COUNTRIES OF REGION.

5. HOWEVER, MIKOYAN WENT ON, A BROAD ANTI-FASCIST POLICY WAS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR ALL LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES. HE DISTINGUISHED BETWEEN "FASCIST" COUNTRIES SUCH AS BRAZIL AND CHILE AND COUNTRIES OF OLDER, SIMPLE,

"DICTATORSHIPS" SUCH AS NICARAGUA AND PARAGUAY -- "WHERE THEY JUST SHOOT YOU IF YOU ARE IN OPPOSITION." THE FASCIST COUNTRIES PER SE COULD STILL BE INTERESTED IN THE IDEA OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND IN CASE OF BRAZIL ONE MIGHT EVEN SAY IT IS A "PROGRESSIVE FASCISTS" COUNTRY BECAUSE OF ITS EMPHASIS ON DEVELOPMENT. THEY ARE TRYING TO MOVE; "OLD DICTATORSHIPS ARE TRYING TO "STOP EVERYTHING."

6. MIKOYAN STATED THAT BASIC ELEMENT OF SOVIET STRATEGY "ON WHICH CUBANS AND SOVIETS AGREE" IS SELF DETERMINATION WITH NO EXPORT OF REVOLUTION. HE REFUSED TO AGREE THAT SOVIET-CUBAN INVOLVEMENT IN ANGOLA INFRINGED THIS CLAIM NOR WOULD HE ADMIT THAT GENUINE FEAR OF CUBAN MILITARY/POLITICAL PRESSURE MIGHT NOW BE FELT BY CUBA'S LATIN AMERICAN NEIGHBORS.

7. MIKOYAN SEEMED VERY DOWNBEAT ON THE IDEA OF PROGRESSIVE TENDENCIES AMONG MILITARY LEADERSHIP IN SOME LA COUNTRIES. MIKOYAN SAID HE THOUGHT MILITARY WAS ONLY VIABLE POLITICAL FORCE IN MANY OR EVEN MOST COUNTRIES, BUT MILITARY SEEM MORE INTERESTED IN HOLDING ON, HE SAID, RATHER THAN IN EXTENDING THEIR BASE OF POPULAR SUPPORT. HE SAID THIS SEEMED TO BE ESPECIALLY TRUE IN PERU. HE AFFIRMED THAT PERUVIANS HAVE A REAL FEAR OF CHILEAN MILITARY ADVENTURISM BUT REFERRING TO SOVIET MILITARY SUPPLY RELATIONSHIPS WITH PERU, ADDED MOROSELY THAT MILITARY SUPPLIERS HAVE A TENDENCY TO BECOME CAPTIVE TO THEIR CLIENTS.

8. WHEN ASKED ABOUT RECENTLY REPORTED REMARKS BY CC CP PERU SECRETARY PRADO CRITICAL OF PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT EMERGENCY MEASURES, MIKOYAN DESCRIBED CP PERU AS A WEAK CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 MOSCOW 10976 121739Z

PARTY IN AN ESPECIALLY VULNERABLE POSITION. HE AGREED WITH A COMPARISON TO THE UNEASY POSITION OF THE INDIAN CP AND SAID CP PERU, WHILE WANTING TO SUPPORT GOVERNMENT, HAD TO RESPOND TO ITS CONSTITUENCY.

9. PARENTHETICALLY, MIKOYAN SAID HE HAD NOT HAD IMPRESSION DURING HIS VISIT THAT PERUVIANS "LIKE US" VERY MUCH: FOR INSTANCE, HE SAID PERUVIANS CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES HAD NOT ALLOWED HIS JOURNAL, "LATIN AMERICA", INTO THE COUNTRY SINCE LAST JANUARY.

10. V. G. SPIRING (COUNSELOR IN SOVIET EMBASSY IN CHILE DURING ALLENDE REGIME) WOULD NOT BE DRAWN OUT ON POSSIBILITY OF WAVERING OF SOVIET SUPPORT FOR PERUVIAN GOVERNMENT'S EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH INTERNAL PROBLEM AND

PAINTED BLACK-AND-WHITE PICTURE OF PROGRESSIVE GOVERNMENT DEFENDING ITSELF AGAINST REACTIONARIES ANGERED BY PROGRESSIVE MEASURES. WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT ROLE OF MILITARY IN GENERAL IN LATIN AMERICA HE REFERRED TO HIS EXPERIENCE IN CHILE CITING "TRADITIONAL" NAVY CONSERVATISM VERSUS ARMY FLEXIBILITY. THE AIR FORCE, HE SAID, USUALLY CAME SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN.

11. ALTHOUGH HE CLAIMED TO BE ONE OF THREE "EXPERTS-COUNSELORS" IN LATIN AMERICA DEPARTMENT RESPONSIBLE FOR OVERALL PROBLEMS, SPIRIN DID NOT RESPOND TO QUESTIONS RAISED IN KUDACHKIN'S PRAVDA ARTICLE, BUT STUCK MAINLY TO QUOTES FROM BREZHNEV'S 25TH CPSU CONGRESS REPORT: THE MAIN TASK IN REGION WAS TO GAIN AND EXERCISE FULL INDEPENDENCE, ESPECIALLY ECONOMIC, AND SOVIETS WHOLEHEARTEDLY SUPPORT THIS GOAL.

12. COMMENT: MIKOYAN, LESS AUTHORITATIVE THAN SPIRIN, WAS LESS INHIBITED IN HIS REMARKS. WHILE MIKOYAN'S ANALYSIS WAS MORE SUBTLE THAN KUDACHKIN'S, THE TWO APPEARED TO SHARE A COMMON PESSIMISM: LATIN AMERICAN "FASCISM" IS GROWING AND THAT LITTLE OF SUBSTANCE COULD BE BROUGHT INTO PLAY AGAINST IT. THESE SOVIETS, AT LEAST, CLAIM NOT TO FEEL SOVIET UNION IS RIDING CREST OF A REVOLUTIONARY WAVE IN LATIN AMERICA, BECAUSE THERE IS NONE; ON THE CONTRARY, THIS IS TIME TO SIT TIGHT, DO WHAT ONE CAN TO
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 05 MOSCOW 10976 121739Z

RESIST CONSERVATIVE PRESSURES AND WAIT FOR TIDE TO TURN. IMPLICATION IS THAT SOVIETS WILL CLEAVE TO MILITARY REGIMES WHERE THEY CAN, BUT WITH DECREASING HOPE THAT THEY WILL REMAIN AS "PROGRESSIVE" AS THEY APPEARED TO BE A FEW YEARS AGO.

13. A FINAL NOTE. MIKOYAN SAID HE WOULD PROBABLY ACCEPT MEXICAN PRESIDENT EXHEVERRIA'S INVITATION TO VISIT AFTER MEXICAN PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION IN FALL.

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